

Wild **WINTER** Wellbeing

Wild at Heart
Be wild, whatever your age

A Wild Welcome...

January and February are often the darkest, coldest months of the year. Looking out of the window can feel bleak and going outside can feel impossible. But nature is ready to meet you outside and lift your spirits.

Taking a short morning walk gets your body moving and can improve your mood. Try tuning in to what is around you, looking for #3GoodThings in nature whilst you are next visiting your local shop. The more you do it the more it becomes a habit that supports your wellbeing.

If you can't get outside to enjoy your local area, you can look out of the window and turn your attention to the natural world. Even better if you can open the window and allow some fresh air in.

Notice where the trees are - have they lost their leaves? Do any still have green leaves? What birds or animals can you spot? Looking for buds, tiny signs that plants are getting ready to blossom as the days lengthen and the sun warms the soil.

We hope you'll find some ideas in this leaflet to try out and enjoy - let us know how you get on!

Jenny, our Wild at Heart Project Officer



Sheffield & Rotherham

For nature, for everyone



WINTER

Winter Seasonal Soup Recipe

A simple yet nutritious and warming soup recipe that's low cost and uses up the seasonal veg in your fridge!

Ingredients:

- 1 onion
- 2 garlic cloves
- 2 carrots
- 2 parsnips
- 3 sticks celery
- 2 small leeks
- 200g dried red lentils

Method:

1. Chop all the vegetables.
2. Fry the onion and garlic until slightly brown.
3. Fry the other vegetables (carrots, parsnips, celery, leeks) until softened.
4. Add all the other ingredients, and 1.2 litres boiling water from the kettle, then stir well.
6. Cover and leave to simmer for 30 mins until the vegetables and lentils are tender.
7. If you want, blend with a hand blender or food processor for a smooth soup, or add cream for a creamy soup.
8. Ladle into bowls and eat straight away. Serve with chunks of crusty bread. Enjoy!

At Wild at Heart we often start our sessions with an active short walk in the park together to experience the sights, sounds and smells of nature all around us. It's great to chat and get to know each other and really get to know the beauty of the greenspaces we are in.

In the winter months it can often be bright and brisk and we can see and hear the wild birds in the leafless trees or see them feeding on the holly or rowan berries. The feel of the cold wind on our faces makes the thought of a cosy hot drink and nature-based activity back in the warm all the more appealing!



Jenny - Project Officer



Susan - Project Assistant



Sheffield Botanical Gardens

Wild at Heart **Project Assistant Jess** tells us about a local greenspace to visit in Winter - Sheffield Botanical Gardens.

The Sheffield Botanical Gardens, just west of the Sheffield Centre in Broomhall, were opened in the 19th Century and cover 19 acres. They have a collection of all sorts of interesting plants and flowers, and have something to see all throughout the year.

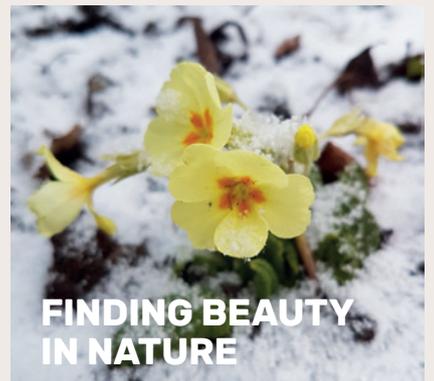
The sloping gardens provide a wonderful view towards the south-west of the city, which I think makes it wonderful for a fresh winter's walk - strolling up the hill and looking down to the wintry city below.

In the gardens themselves are plenty of little paths and things to explore - I do love seeing the Victorian 'Bear Pit' to say hello to the lovely brown bear inside, listening to the birds scurrying

and flitting between the hedges beside the paths, and watching the fountain bubbling away at the bottom of the magnificent main aisle. I think the life and character in the Gardens makes it well worth visiting in the chilly winter months.



Jess - Project Assistant



FINDING BEAUTY IN NATURE

Winter might be dark, but there's plenty of wonderful sights to see all the same! Here are just some beautiful things to look out for this Winter:

- Fresh, untouched snow
- Frost-covered spiderwebs
- Snowdrops, primroses, and crocuses - flowers in late winter!
- Colourful mushrooms
- Dazzling sunsets
- Ice formations on a pond or the window

ACTIVITY

Fruity Bird Feeders

Our Wild at Heart **Project Assistant Susan** shows us how to attract birds to our gardens. Attracting birds to your garden is a great way of getting closer to nature and observing the birds feeding behaviour and interactions. Great for you, and great for the birds!

Ingredients and Equipment:

- Oranges or apples
- Bird food (e.g. sunflower hearts, mixed corn, peanuts and meal worms)
- Lard
- String
- Scissors
- Crochet hook
- Sharp knife
- Chopping board
- Teaspoons
- Heavy bottomed pan

Hot lemon & ginger drink

This simple combination of fiery ginger and tangy lemon is a great way to bring warmth to your body. You could make a flask of it in the morning and sip it all day.

As a guide this recipe is enough to make two mugs.

1 lemon

2cm piece of ginger finely sliced

1. Cut the lemon in half and squeeze the juice from one half and slice the other half. Add the ginger and the lemon juice and slices to a heatproof jug and add boiling water (enough for two mugs).
2. Leave to steep for 5-10mins and then use a sieve or tea strainer to pour the liquid into the mugs. The drink is ready - if you want to sweeten it you can stir in a tiny bit of honey.

- 1 Cut your fruit: slice the orange in half, and slice the top off the apple.
- 2 Use a knife to cut around the edge of the orange and apple. Leave the white of the orange in place and quite a thick edge if it is an apple.
- 3 Use a teaspoon to scoop out the inside of the orange or apple - you can eat this or add it into the seed mixture. You should have a fruity 'cup' now.
- 4 Use your crochet hook to make 4 holes in the fruit equidistant apart. Use the crochet hook to pull the string through holes and knot and tie so that they are secure.
- 5 Using a low heat melt the lard in the heavy bottomed pan, then add the bird food mixture and stir.
- 6 Holding the string out of the way, pack this bird food mixture into the fruity cups.
- 7 Leave to set and then hang in the trees for your feathered friends to find and enjoy!



Walk in nature in a mindful way

Winter in particular can be a hard time, when we might either dwell on the past, or worry about the future of the coming year. Mindfulness, in contrast, helps us focus on the experiences and feelings of the present, by training our minds to slow down and be in the moment. Here is a relaxing Mindfulness Walk for you to try out yourself.

Wrap up warm, and head out for your walk and head for somewhere green: your local park, or river, or street lined with trees.

As you walk, or upon finding somewhere comfortable to sit - begin to slow yourself down, relax your mind and muscles, and tune in to your surroundings.

Now, take each of your senses in turn and pay attention to your present surroundings.

Listen: Can you hear bird song, water rushing, people talking, leaves rustling?

Smell: Can you smell the earth, freshly cut grass, a woody smell, cooking food?

Sight: What colours can you see? How does the light fall on the ground?

Feel: Can you feel the sun or wind on your face? Are you chilly, or toasty warm?

Feelings: How do you feel right now? Do you feel yourself winding down and relaxing?

You can create lots of little mindful moments so that gradually over time you are noticing nature all around you as a regular part of your day. Give it a go and see how it feels!

COLD DAY IDEA

One participant shared a wonderful idea to warm up cold hands when you return home. Before you set off either pop a towel on the warm radiator or make a hot water bottle and wrap the towel around it. Ready for your return where you can take some time to use the warm towels to wrap your hands in and enjoy the warmth. Then gently massage your hands to aid circulation. If you have any hand balm, rub that into your hands to make the experience extra enjoyable.





BRAIN TEASER

Kennings

These poems are riddles; each describes an animal or plant or something found in nature in two paired words, building up a visual image with each line until it is revealed in the last line. See if you can guess what each 'kenning' is describing before the reveal at the end!

Feet waddler

Fish lover

Tummy slider

Great jumper

Brilliant swimmer

Breath holder

Cold survivor

Antarctic

- I am a penguin!

Winter-dust

Cloud-blossom

Icy lace

Pearls of the sky

Arctic foam

Footstep cruncher

White cover

Falling cold

- I am snow!

Night flyer

Mouse eater

Silent swooper

Head twister

Taloned taker

- I am an owl!

Tips to enjoy a winter walk

Winter can be a magical time with clearer fresher skies which offer a perfect opportunity for a wander outside. However, average temperatures for Sheffield in winter are between 2°C and 7°C with any wind making it feel cooler.

What to think about:

Keep warm: Wear a coat with jumper layers underneath (waterproofs are good for keeping out the wind), a woolly hat and gloves are essential.

Keep safe: Wear shoes that will grip the ground in the mud, snow or ice (consider getting some anti-slip grips), use a stick for balance and tell someone where you are going.

Check the time: With winter come shorter days and early nights, if you're going out, check your sunrise and sunset times: www.bbc.co.uk/weather

Look up: Maybe take the opportunity to have a twilight walk or find a safe place to stand and look up at the stars. This is what you might see: www.space.com/16149-night-sky.html

Listen out... for nocturnal animals starting to wake and forage, like a swooping bat, a lurking fox or a busy mouse.

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If you would like to find out more about all of our work across Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust please contact us or visit www.wildsheffield.com.

For more activities, wild recipes, videos and small ways to stay connected to nature, find Wild at Heart on Facebook at [Facebook.com/WildatHeartproject](https://www.facebook.com/WildatHeartproject) and follow us on Twitter: @WildatHeartSRWT

Take a look at our Wild at Heart at Home Nature Adventures page on our website www.wildsheffield.com/home/wild-at-heart-at-home

More information about the project can be found at: www.wildsheffield.com/discover/your-community/wild-at-heart

For further information contact:

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